

MINUTES
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 6, 2005
REGULAR SESSION

Public Hearing – Purecoat North

The Board of Selectmen convened a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall to discuss alternative use of the Purecoat North property.
All members were present.

Dr. Solomon explained that at a recent meeting with Purecoat North representatives, the Board of Selectmen and members of the Town's Purecoat Planning Committee, the company raised the question of what other uses the property could be put to. The Selectmen scheduled this meeting to elicit ideas from the public for alternative uses for the Purecoat North site.

Noah Sachs, Chairman of the Purecoat Planning Committee (PPC) reported to the meeting on the steps his committee has undertaken. Since its creation, the PPC has concentrated on the environmental condition of the site. The PPC has corresponded with both the company and the state's DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) on two active spills on the property. PPC members will continue to pursue these environmental issues.

As for re-use of the site, Mr. Sachs reported that his committee unanimously agrees that all environmental concerns be addressed first. The PPC sees its role as shaping the process for achieving re-use of the site and providing guidance to Purecoat about what re-uses will be acceptable to the Town.

Dr. Solomon invited audience members to speak about their concerns about the site and about their ideas for what uses might replace the current industrial operation.

Several town residents expressed their concern about both current environmental problems with the site and potential issues which they would like to see addressed when considering re-use options.

The concerns described were:

1. That the process of cleaning-up the site move forward expeditiously and making Purecoat's exit possible without trying to punish the company
2. Who will pay for the clean-up
3. Traffic issues, whatever the eventual re-use is

4. Flooding problems, given that the property and surrounding area are both in a flood zone
5. That the parcel not be re-used as a strip mall
6. That the parcel not be developed for use by a bio-tech firm
7. That any new construction on the site be built on a slab to avoid disturbing contaminated soil
8. That tax revenue implications should be an important consideration in re-use planning, e.g., impact of housing on schools
9. That the property owner and Town co-ordinate with the MBTA on the logistics of the clean-up
10. That there be thoughtful planning of the demolition process and its effect on existing traffic
11. The density of any new construction

The following ideas for categories of re-use were offered by attendees of the meeting:

1. Housing on a scale acceptable to the neighborhood
2. Independent/Assisted Living facility for the elderly
3. Land swap with a Town-owned parcel to achieve a low impact public use of the site, e.g., soccer field
4. Mega Plex which might house a Senior Center, Skating Rink, Teen Center
5. Office Building in character with other office buildings in the Belmont area for professional offices specifically

At the conclusion of the idea solicitation segment of the meeting, Dr. Solomon brought the discussion back to the Board to address what additional guidance the Board of Selectmen can offer to the Purecoat Committee on pursuing re-use options. Mr. Brownsberger suggested the Board of Selectmen instruct the Purecoat Committee to develop residential options for the site, which might encourage a friendly Chapter 40B development given the Town's affordable housing by-law. Mr. Firenze did not want to limit re-use options to housing alone as he sees potential for an assisted living facility use of the parcel.

The Board moved: to instruct the Purecoat Committee to move forward on exploring residential re-use options for the site not to the exclusion of other options and to move in a direction that would result in recommendations on re-use to the Board of Selectmen.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

At this juncture in the meeting, Board of Health members Dr. David Alper and Donna David, Donna Moultrup, Director of the Health Department and Brian

Glennon, Esquire of Kopelman & Paige, Town Counsel, legal advisor to the Board of Health on the Purecoat nuisance matter arrived to report on their recently concluded executive session. [Bob Eisendrath a member of the Board of Health had been at the executive session but was not present to report to the Board of Selectmen.] Dr. Alper spoke for the Board of Health explaining that Purecoat's most recent environmental report describes a viable proposed source for the nuisance odor. The Board of Health is sending a letter to Purecoat forthwith requiring that the company report its progress toward abatement at the BOH's February meeting.

Purecoat Committee member Raymond Miyares asked the Board of Selectmen to provide guidance to his committee on what it should be doing on the environmental issues which continue to affect the Purecoat site.

The Board moved: to recognize that Purecoat Planning Committee's continued aggressive pursuit of the environmental investigation of the site is put in its charge and to support the steps this committee takes in this regard.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

OTHER

Town Buildings Security Committee

Mr. Firenze reported that he attended a meeting of the Town Buildings Security Committee this week where he saw demonstrations of various security systems. Kevin Looney is taking charge of this committee.

Town Administrator Search

Mr. Brownsberger described conversations he had with Town Administrator's Search Committee member Tim Riley, and with Dick Bennett, consultant to that Committee, about amending the Town Administrator's By-law to spell out more clearly the scope of responsibilities of that position. It may be advisable for the Board to contemplate such an amendment either during the search process or after a new Town Administrator is hired.

MMA Convention

Dr. Solomon who as Chairman of the Board holds the Town's voting power in the Massachusetts Municipal Association is unlikely to be able to attend the annual meeting this weekend in Boston. Mr. Firenze will attend in his place.

The Board moved: to give Angelo Firenze the Board of Selectmen's proxy for purposes of voting at the MMA Annual Meeting on Friday, January 7, 2005.

The motion carried unanimously (3-0).

The Board voted to adjourn the open session at 10:00 P.M.

Dr. Paul Solomon, Chairman
Board of Selectmen